



November 2004

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### Message from the Assistant Secretary: Medicare Prevention Benefits

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HHS is taking another step to help seniors be active and healthy by making Medicare Preventive Benefits available beginning January 2005. HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced on November 9 that for new Medicare beneficiaries, the "Welcome to Medicare" physical exam and other program enhancements will provide Medicare beneficiaries with greater access to prevention benefits. As part of this initiative, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services will work closely with other HHS agencies to share the prevention message with seniors and their families to broaden the emphasis on prevention and early detection, including the areas of diabetes, elevated cholesterol levels and cancer. Also, Medicare Advantage plans will have the flexibility to cover far-reaching prevention services, such as wellness programs, beyond what Medicare covers. These plans offer prevention benefits including health education services, physical activity programs and other services that alert patients to potential health risks and work with them to encourage healthy behavioral changes. These services are key features of the Medicare Modernization Act, signed into law by President George W. Bush in December 2003.

I am confident that members of the National Aging Services network will want to take the opportunity to inform older adults in every community across our country about these important new Medicare prevention benefits. For more information visit: <http://www.dhhs.gov/news/press/2004pres/20041109.html>.

Josefina G. Carbonell

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### AoA Briefing on New Data that Supports the Family Caregiver Role as Vital

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On November 18, the Assistant Secretary for Aging briefed more than 40 members of the National Aging Services Network about recent findings that underscore the important role that caregivers play in the well-being of older adults. AoA conducted

this briefing as part of our celebration of National Family Caregivers Month. The Assistant Secretary affirmed the role of informal family caregivers as an important part of our nation's home and community based long-term care system, and outlined the work that lies ahead to prepare for an aging population. Frank Burns, AoA Director of Evaluation highlighted relevant findings from the new *Older Americans 2004: Key Indicators of Well-Being* and results of the evaluation of the National Family Caregiver Support Program. This new report comprises 37 key indicators concerning lives of older Americans and their families and is an update of the 2000 report published by the Federal Interagency Forum on Aging Related Statistics. Lynn Friss Feinberg, Deputy Director, National Center on Caregiving, Family Caregiver Alliance, discussed the results of the newly released AoA funded study, *The State of the States in Family Caregiver Support: A 50-State Study*. This study is the first to examine publicly funded caregiver support programs throughout the country. Other Speakers included Adrienne Dern, Deputy Director of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and Katryna Gould, family caregiver who has received assistance through the National Family Caregiver Support Program. For a copy of the *Older Americans 2004 : Key Indicators of Well-Being* report and accompanying Power Point Slides visit: <http://www.agingstats.gov>. To download a copy of the 50 states study or state-by-state profiles go to: <http://www.caregiver.org>.

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## **HHS Provides Hurricane Relief to Florida, Alabama, and Puerto Rico**

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On behalf of HHS Secretary, Tommy G. Thompson, the Assistant Secretary for Aging announced \$42.6 million in funding for Florida for critical services to communities that continue to recover from the multiple hurricanes that hit the state this fall at a press conference in Tallahassee, Florida on November 12. This funding will provide mental health, substance abuse, medical and social services to people affected by hurricanes this year, and is in addition to more than \$12 million HHS previously made available to hurricane recovery efforts. Four HHS agencies will administer the funding to Florida. AoA has provided \$17.2 million of funding for the Florida Department of Elder Affairs to provide support services for the elderly for minor home repairs and chore services, meals, case management, individual and group counseling and temporary housing. The Assistant Secretary announced \$3.2 million for Alabama to use for critical services in affected communities and \$1.2 million to Puerto Rico to assist with services for elderly, homeless, and disabled populations affected by these hurricanes. The Assistant Secretary made this announcement during a press conference in Fairhope, Alabama also held on November 12. For a copy of the press release announcing Florida funding visit: [http://www.aoa.gov/press/pr/2004/11\\_Nov/11\\_12\\_04.asp](http://www.aoa.gov/press/pr/2004/11_Nov/11_12_04.asp). The Assistant Secretary's remarks can be viewed at: [http://www.aoa.gov/press/speeches/2004/11\\_Nov/Hurricane%20relief%20announcement%20FL.pdf](http://www.aoa.gov/press/speeches/2004/11_Nov/Hurricane%20relief%20announcement%20FL.pdf) and at: [http://www.aoa.gov/press/speeches/2004/11\\_Nov/Hurricane%20relief%20announcement%20AL.pdf](http://www.aoa.gov/press/speeches/2004/11_Nov/Hurricane%20relief%20announcement%20AL.pdf).

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**For the full issue of the November AoA e-news visit: .**

## AoA News

### **Aging Network involvement in Health and Social Support Systems Integration**

The National Aging Services Network has played an important role in creating more balanced long-term care systems by shifting the balance from institutional to community living. To highlight these efforts, AoA contracted with Research Triangle Institute to conduct a series of case studies on some of the program models that have been developed through the Aging Network. These five studies highlight 14 state or local community programs that have contributed to strengthening community-based care options for older Americans. The case studies address integrated access to services, redirecting public LTC expenditures, consumer-directed options, creating more balanced LTC systems, and integrated information systems. For more information and to access the case studies visit:

<http://www.aoa.gov/prof/agingnet/HSSSI/HSSSI.asp>.

## **AoA Celebrated November as National Family Caregiver Month**

AoA celebrated National Family Caregivers Month in November as an opportunity to honor caregivers and to raise awareness about the broad array of long term care and community based services we provide for older adults and their family caregivers through our partnerships with the National Aging Services Network. This month AoA celebrated Caregivers Month by:

- Posting consumer-oriented Caregiver Fact Sheets on the AoA Web site, addressing issues like grandparent resources, working caregivers, transportation, consumer direction, taking care of yourself, and home modifications.
- Partnering with the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging to highlight caregiver program champions each day during November as a way to share innovative/successful caregiver support initiatives with the aging network.
- Linking to the White House caregiver's month proclamation.
- Participating in the Maryland Governor's Conference on Aging. The Assistant Secretary spoke at this conference on November 5 held at the University of Maryland's Inn and Conference Center in Adelphi, Maryland.
- Holding a press conference on November 18 at the National Press Conference in Washington.
- Participating in the Rosalynn Carter Institute's Creating Caring Caregiver Networks Conference, the Assistant Secretary gave the keynote address at a first-ever statewide conference on November 19. She joined former First Lady Rosalynn Carter.

For more information visit: [http://www.aoa.gov/press/nfc\\_month/nfc\\_month.asp](http://www.aoa.gov/press/nfc_month/nfc_month.asp).

## **New Resources: Driving Forward with Transportation**

Transportation resources for caregivers are only a click away. First, Easter Seals offers a free caregiver transportation toolkit that includes a video, a facilitator's manual, and helpful transportation guidance for caregivers. Easter Seals created this tool as part of the Transportation Solutions for Caregivers program funded by AoA. The TSC provides support to reduce the transportation difficulties of caregivers by enhancing their awareness of transportation alternatives and resources. Secondly, AoA offers two new transportation fact sheets with tips and issues to help educate caregivers and their loved ones, *Transportation Tips for Family Caregivers* and *Transportation Issues to Consider for Family Caregivers*. For more information about the TSC program go to:

[http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntl\\_trans\\_care](http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntl_trans_care)

To access the new transportation fact sheets visit:

[http://www.aoa.gov/press/nfc\\_month/nfc\\_month.asp](http://www.aoa.gov/press/nfc_month/nfc_month.asp).

## **United We Ride State Coordination Grants**

Through the United We Ride program, 45 states have received grants of \$35,000 each to help them more efficiently utilize transportation resources that serve senior, disabled and disadvantaged citizens. The U.S. Department of Transportation launched United We Ride in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor and Education - to break down the barriers between the 62 federal programs that fund transportation services and set the stage for local partnerships that increase the coordination of transportation services for older adults as well as persons with disabilities or low incomes. State Units on Aging are strongly encouraged to connect with their counterparts at the State Departments of Transportation to participate in the implementation of these grants. The goal will be the development and implementation of action plans to increase coordination across all state transportation programs. To learn more about United We Ride go to: [http://www.fta.dot.gov/CCAM/www/Newsletters/UWR\\_Newsletter\\_2004\\_11\\_16.htm](http://www.fta.dot.gov/CCAM/www/Newsletters/UWR_Newsletter_2004_11_16.htm)

### ***You Can!* Campaign Now Offers Easy Way to Find Partners**

AoA has just added a new *You Can!* Partner Map to our Web site to make it easier for you to find organizations in your state that have joined the *You Can! Steps to Healthier Aging* campaign. As of now, more than 1,250 organizations have joined the campaign and have made a commitment to help older Americans make wise nutrition choices and increase their physical activity. AoA launched this new outreach and awareness campaign on September 1 to help spread the word to our senior population about the importance of taking small steps for a healthier lifestyle. Click here to view the new *You Can!* Partner Map:

[http://www.aoa.gov/youcan/partners\\_public/partners\\_list.asp](http://www.aoa.gov/youcan/partners_public/partners_list.asp) or for more information or to enroll in the *You Can!* campaign visit: [www.aoa.gov/youcan](http://www.aoa.gov/youcan).

### **AoA Makes Livable Communities Award to Visiting Nurse Organization**

AoA is committed to identifying new models that will expand the number of livable communities for current and future generations of older Americans. AoA has awarded \$125,000 to the Visiting Nurse Service of New York for an initiative that will raise awareness and motivate actions designed to improve the livability of communities for people of all ages and abilities. This grant will identify and showcase communities that best meet the criteria of a livable community, and will highlight promising practices that can be used by county and municipal governments throughout the country in preparing for the aging of the baby boom population. The VNSNY will conduct a competitive process to identify the top eight models of *Livable Communities for All Ages*. VNSY also will work with the selected sites to develop a written manual and action plan that county and municipal governments can implement in replicating successful models of livable communities.

### **Policy and Program Updates**

#### **New HHS Initiatives to Help Americans Quit Smoking**

On November 10, HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced a series of initiatives designed to help Americans quit smoking. The initiatives include the opening of a national telephone quitline that puts users in touch with programs that can help them give up tobacco and a new HHS Web site that offers online advice and downloadable information to make smoking cessation easier. Quitlines offer advice,

support and referrals to local cessation services. Scientific evidence shows quitlines are effective tools that help smokers quit. Cigarette smoking is the nation's leading preventable cause of death and disease, causing about 440,000 premature deaths each year. For more information call the toll-free number at: 1-800-784-8669 or visit: [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov). For a full copy of the press release go to: <http://www.dhhs.gov/news/press/2004pres/20041110.html>.

### **Funding Opportunity--Fall Prevention for Older Adults**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Procurement and Grants Office has published a program announcement entitled, "Dissemination Research on Fall Prevention: Development and Testing of an Exercise Program Package to Prevent Older Adult Falls" (CDC-RFA-CE05029, November 9, 2004). An estimated \$350,000 will be available in fiscal year 2005 to fund approximately one award. The purpose of the program is to: support research on translating an exercise intervention that rigorous research has shown is effective in reducing falls among older adults into a program; test implementation of the program in a community setting; and conduct dissemination research focusing on reach, adoption, feasibility, fidelity of the implementation, and acceptability. The application due date: February 7, 2005 and the estimated funding date is September 1, 2005. For more information visit: <http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/HHS/CDC/PGO/CDC-RFA-CE05029/Grant.html>

### **Risks of Drinking Juices and Cider Not Pasteurized**

The FDA would like to remind consumers that there are health risks associated with drinking juice or cider that has not been treated in any way to kill harmful bacteria. Such products may be sold in bottles or by the glass in supermarkets, at farmers markets, at roadside stands, or in some juice bars. Untreated products that are sold in bottles are generally displayed on ice or in refrigerated cases and are required to carry the following warning statement on their label:

**WARNING:** This product has not been pasteurized and therefore, may contain harmful bacteria that can cause serious illness in children, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems.

FDA advises consumers that, when in doubt, look for this warning statement on bottled juice and ask if fresh squeezed juice has been treated in a way to kill bacteria. For additional information visit, <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov> or for the full paper go to: <http://www.fda.gov/bbs/topics/ANSWERS/2004/ANS01321.html>

### **Updated NHLBI Portion Distortion Quiz to Avoid Holiday Weight Gain**

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has updated its Portion Distortion website with new additions to the "Portion Distortion Interactive Quiz," a part of its Aim for a Healthy Weight program. It shows the difference in size and calories between portions offered 20 years ago and today's typical servings and the amount of physical activity one has to do to burn up those extra calories. The newer version includes eight additional common foods and beverages such as a slice of pizza, specialty coffees, and muffins -- items people consume everyday without thinking about the calories they contain. The new Portion Distortion website also contains tools for health educators and dietitians, including PowerPoint slides and graphics of portion sizes. The quiz can be accessed at <http://hin.nhlbi.nih.gov/portion/>.

Additional information on NHLBI's Obesity Education Initiative, including a BMI calculator, is available online at: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/oei/index.htm>.

### **New NIA Age Page on Shingles**

About 20 percent of older Americans develop shingles during their lifetime. To help seniors understand and cope with this disease, the National Institute on Aging has produced a new Age Page, *Shingles*, which discusses the symptoms, risk factors, treatment, and complications, including post-herpetic neuralgia, an extremely painful aftermath of shingles. The brochure also offers tips for staying comfortable and lists helpful resources. Readers can view the *Shingles* Age Page online or order a free copy at <http://www.niapublications.org/engagepages/shingles.asp>. For more information visit <http://www.niapublications.org>. You can also call the NIA Information Center at 1-800-222-2225 to request free print copies of materials.

### **Be Smart About Your Heart—Control the ABCs of Diabetes**

About 65 percent of people with diabetes will die from a heart attack or stroke, yet two out of every three people with diabetes are unaware of their increased risk. *Be Smart About Your Heart. Control the ABCs of Diabetes: A1C, Blood pressure, and Cholesterol*, NDEP's campaign about diabetes and cardiovascular disease, encourages people with diabetes to control not only their blood glucose (sugar), but also their blood pressure and cholesterol. By keeping all three levels as close to normal as possible, people with diabetes can live long, healthy lives. At the center of the campaign are consumer education materials in English, Spanish, and 15 Asian and Pacific Islander languages that explain the link between diabetes and heart disease and promote comprehensive control. For more information call 1-800-860-8747 or visit [http://ndep.nih.gov/campaigns/BeSmart/BeSmart\\_index.htm](http://ndep.nih.gov/campaigns/BeSmart/BeSmart_index.htm).

### **Online Information about the 2005 White House Conference on Aging**

The White House Conference on Aging Web site houses an array of information about the planning and progress of the 2005 White House Conference on Aging. The site not only features architecture for easy navigation and access to information, but also contains a calendar of events and links to other resources. The site is designed to reach a growing number of individuals who increasingly use the Internet to gain information, conduct daily business and lead healthier, better quality lives. The WHCOA's new Web site provides information about the Conference, which is scheduled to take place on October 23-26, 2005 in Washington, D.C. Included on the site will be results of Policy Committee meetings including the development of the Conference agenda, topic areas and the delegate selection, as well as important regional, state and local information related to the Conference. The WHCOA Web site will continue to be updated as information becomes available. The mission of the WHCOA is to make policy recommendations to the President and Congress, and to assist the public and private sectors in promoting dignity, health, independence, and economic security of current and future generations of older persons. For more information go to: [www.whcoa.gov](http://www.whcoa.gov)).



## Grantee Spotlight

### Trust in the Lives of Older Women

"Trust in the Lives of Older Women," an AoA funded program administered by the Office for the Aging in Schuyler County New York shows great promise in helping individuals deal with the multitude of aging problems, while establishing a reservoir of long term volunteers. Dr. Ron Hofsess of Elmira College, New York developed the program and has established a number of unique support groups for older women. These groups are neither disease nor event driven and the members come from all walks of life, with different life experiences, training, and education. Preliminary studies suggest members experience beneficial health effects, better attitudes towards aging, and increased volunteerism. Robert E. Dunphy, Office on Aging Director recommends that other agencies consider establishing their own support groups. Other than the initial facilitator training there is little cost to an agency. Since participants are generally caregivers, funding for such training may be used from Title III E of the Older Americans Act. The participants receive direct benefits from participation in such groups and the host Agency will have developed another resource for volunteers. For more information visit: [www.choose2trust.com](http://www.choose2trust.com).

## Of Interest

### Grant Funding Available for Hurricane-Related Family Caregiving Needs

The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving has announced the availability of grant funding to address family caregiving needs stemming from the hurricanes of 2004. These funds have been made available by Johnson & Johnson through the J&J/RCI Caregivers Program of the RCI. Individual awards, available to 501(c)3 organizations, will range from \$1,000 to \$10,000. A total of \$100,000 is available and will be distributed as applications are received and evaluated. For more information and an application, please view the attached press release and visit us at [www.RosalynnCarter.org](http://www.RosalynnCarter.org).

### Mapping Your Future Planning New Online Planning Guide

The Council for Jewish Elderly in Chicago has developed an online interactive version of their *Mapping Your Future Your Way!* planning guide. This guide helps those approaching retirement assess their goals and develop strategies in critical areas such as health, finances, housing, work and leisure, and relationships. The Atlanta Regional Commission plans to use the guide in their efforts to partner with businesses, including their human resources departments, to provide support for employee retirement planning and transition-including assessment and counseling. To access the guide visit: <http://www.cje.net/future/>.

### ASA Presents Part Two of Free Older Driver Web Seminars

Older adults are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population, and many of them are still driving. For older adults, driving represents the ability to maintain connections and contribute to the community. What can we do to keep older adults driving safely for as long as possible? In some cases we can improve their



functioning and teach strategies to those who have experienced functional loss. Additionally, by providing education about alternative ways to get around, communities can help older adults make smoother transitions from driving full-time to cutting back or stopping altogether. Following the tremendous response to their first older driver web seminar series, American Society on Aging presents a second series of web seminars to address major concerns of older drivers and their providers in maintaining driving safety, mobility and connections to the community. ASA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration have collaborated to bring you three live presentations by some of the nation's leading authorities on these issues. The hour-long presentations are free, and you can participate at the convenience of your desk. If you are unable to attend the live presentations, you will have the opportunity to view a recording of the seminars for a period of six months. Register by logging on to [www.asaging.org/webseminars](http://www.asaging.org/webseminars) and clicking "Promoting Safety and Independence through Older Driver Wellness."

### **In Search of...Outstanding Older Volunteers**

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging has issued a call for nominations for the MetLife Foundation 2005 *Older Volunteers Enrich America Awards*. This program, now in its third year, was established to honor the exemplary contributions of older volunteers and to encourage other older adults to contribute their knowledge, skills and time to enrich society through volunteerism. The program honors 25 individuals age 50 and over by providing awards in three categories: (1) Community Champion, (2) Mentor and (3) Team Spirit. Nominations must be submitted to N4A by December 22, 2004. The honorees will be recognized at an awards ceremony scheduled for April 22, 2005 in Washington, D.C. The nomination brochure is available by clicking on "Volunteer Awards" link at [www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org) <http://www.n4a.org>. For further information, contact Leslie Swift-Rosenzweig at 202/872-0888 or [lsrosenzweig@n4a.org](mailto:lsrosenzweig@n4a.org).

### **CMS Sponsored Nursing Home Program Reduces Pain by 45 Percent**

Representatives of Nursing homes participating in a two-year quality improvement program say data collected so far show improved resident pain management by about 45 percent. The nursing home staff participating used a variety of methods to successfully treat pain including pharmacological agents, exercise, physical therapy, music and aroma therapy, hydro-therapy (whirl pools), use of comfort items. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services sponsors the Corporate Nursing Home Improvement Collaborative project. CMS initiated the CNHIC at the request of nursing home companies interested in collaborating to improve quality of care. Participating companies pledged to continue to ensure gains achieved through the project are maintained and serve as a stepping-stone to future improvements in many other nursing homes. The project is coordinated by the Colorado Foundation for Medical Care and Quality Partners of Rhode Island. For more information about pain management and the CNHIC visit: <http://www.medqic.org/content/nationalpriorities/nursinghome/nhTopics.jsp?topicID=413&nhID=1028715#CorporateNursingHomeImprovementCollaborative>.

### **Disclaimer from the U.S. Administration on Aging**

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#### **About AoA**

AoA works with a nationwide network of organizations and service providers to make support services and resources available to older persons and their caregivers. For more information about AoA, please contact us by mail at U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging, Washington, DC 20201; by phone at (202) 619-0724; by e-mail at [aoainfo@aoa.gov](mailto:aoainfo@aoa.gov); or visit us on the Web at [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov).

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